



## Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

These Safeguarding Policy & Procedures form part of the terms and conditions of employment for employees at Lions Sports Academy Limited.

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## Lions Sports Academy (LSA) Safeguarding Policy Statement

***Sport is fun and everyone should feel safe when participating.***

Lions Sports Academy Limited is committed to ensuring all participants have a safe and enjoyable experience during their time in the Academy.

## General Principles

- The Lions Sports Academy Safeguarding Policy and Procedures apply to all employees and

volunteers at any coaching, session or event organised or endorsed by Lions Sports Academy Limited.

- Safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility' and LSA promotes this ethos throughout their activities and coaching by setting and implementing best practice standards for the care of young people.
- The LSA Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are written in conjunction with the *Rugby Football Union (RFU) Safeguarding Policy, Guidance and Procedures* [http://www.englandrugby.com/mm/Document/MyRugby/Volunteers/01/30/36/55/RFU\\_Safeguarding\\_Policy\\_Guidance\\_and\\_Procedures\\_Neutral.pdf](http://www.englandrugby.com/mm/Document/MyRugby/Volunteers/01/30/36/55/RFU_Safeguarding_Policy_Guidance_and_Procedures_Neutral.pdf) and in particular the Core Values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship.
- For the purpose of the LSA Safeguarding Policy and Procedure a child or 'young person' is identified as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

## Scope

- It is a mandatory requirement for all LSA employees or volunteers to implement and adhere to the LSA Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

## Lead Safeguarding Officer

- LSA has appointed a trained Lead Safeguarding Officer whose role is to act as a point of safeguarding information and advice.
- The LSA Lead Safeguarding Officer should be informed if any concerns arise in any activity or coaching session that involves a young person or an adult.
- The LSA Lead Safeguarding Officer can be contacted by emailing [Safeguarding@lionssports.academy](mailto:Safeguarding@lionssports.academy) or ringing 020 3424 5070.

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## What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding refers to the process of protecting children (and adults) to provide safe and effective

care. This includes all procedures designed to prevent harm to a child.

## Best safeguarding practice, poor practice and abuse

LSA aims to provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in all their activities and coaching.

It is not always easy to differentiate poor practice from abuse; however LSA recognises poor practice as any behaviour contravening the LSA Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. The expectation is that all LSA staff and volunteers will be implementing best safeguarding practice at all times.

Best safeguarding practice promoted by all employees and volunteers:

- A fun and enjoyable experience, promoting fairness and the rules of the sport ▪

Promote a positive environment and opportunities for all involved

- Confront and deal appropriately with any issues include bullying that may arise during activities or coaching sessions
- Respect the developmental age of each young person and place their welfare before a win at all costs ethos
- Conduct all activities or coaching sessions in an open environment and avoid one-to-one coaching sessions in unobserved areas
- Build all relationships based on mutual trust and respect in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development
- Be aware of all medical conditions (including allergies), existing injuries and any medication
- Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given
- Maintain a safe and appropriate and professional coach/participant relationship ▪ Be an excellent role model and advocate for the sport, activity or coaching session
- Ensure any allegations, disclosures or suspicions of poor practice or abuse are treated with respect and passed to the Lead Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

## What is child abuse?

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Child abuse is the maltreatment of a child. It can take a number of forms e.g. where someone deliberately inflicts harm or fails to act to prevent harm. This abuse is often from an individual the child knows and trusts.

Lions Sports Academy Limited recognise that child abuse can happen both inside and outside the family. It is not easy to determine whether abuse has occurred. However, this is the responsibility of the professional agencies (Children's Social Care, Police) to decide.

LSA staff have a duty to be vigilant and respond to any disclosures, the following are the categories of child abuse; neglect, physical, emotional, sexual, child sexual exploitation (CSE). Bullying is not (in theory) a type of child abuse, though it is acknowledged as having a detrimental effect causing distress to a child.

## General signs of abuse

### Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs. It is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Possible physical signs to look out for:

- Being constantly hungry and sometimes stealing food from others.
- Being in an unkempt state; frequently dirty or smelly.
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight.
- Being dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions.
- Untreated medical conditions, not being taken for medical treatment for illnesses or injuries.

### Physical Abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Possible physical signs to look out for:

- Injuries which the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly.
- Injuries which have not been treated or treated inadequately.
- Injuries on parts of the body where accidental injury is unlikely, such as the cheeks, chest or thighs.
- Bruising which reflects hand or finger marks.
- Cigarette burns, human bite marks.
- Broken bones.

### Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Possible physical signs to look out for:

- A failure to grow or thrive.
- Delayed development, either physical or emotional.

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Possible behavioural signs to look out for:

- An unwillingness or inability to play.
- An excessive fear of making mistakes.
- Self-harm.
- Reluctance to have parents contacted.
- An excessive defence towards others, especially adults.
- An excessive need for approval, attention or affection.
- An inability to cope with praise.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities.

Possible behavioural signs to look out for:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- An apparent fear of someone.
- Self-harm, self-mutilations, or attempts of suicide.
- Abuse of drugs or other substances.
- Eating problems.
- Sexualised behaviour or knowledge in young children.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

A form of sexual abuse in which a young person is manipulated or forced into taking part in a sexual act. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly consensual relationship where sex is exchanged for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol, food, shelter, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Technology is widely used by perpetrators as a method of grooming victims, often through social media networks. This form of abuse is usually a hidden crime as the child/young person trusts their abuser and does not understand why they are being abused. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual acts.

Possible behavioural signs to look out for:

- Going missing for periods of time. (Regularly missing school)
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends/girlfriends

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour

## **Bullying**

Whilst bullying is not a type of child abuse in its own right it has a number of common areas (emotional, physical, racist, sexual, homophobic, verbal, cyber).

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The possible physical signs may overlap with the signs identified in the examples above. It is important to highlight that it is NOT your responsibility to decide if a child is being abused, bullied or if the situation is poor practice. It is your responsibility to share your concerns about a situation with the LSA Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Lions Sports Academy Limited is aware of the consequences for children, when they are abused or neglected:

- That child protection issues can arise anywhere.
- The importance of early intervention.
- The need for an appropriate response.

## **Extremism and Radicalisation**

The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.

Possible behavioural signs to look out for:

- The young person is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage
- Discomfort about their place in society
- Personal crisis, the young person may be experiencing family tensions
- A sense of isolation
- Low self-esteem/a feeling of failure
- Disassociation from friends and a sudden new involvement with a new group of 'friends'
- Searching for answers to questions about their identity, faith and belonging.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviours which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. For more information on radicalisation please refer to the governments prevention strategy at:

[The Channel Programme](#)

## **Incident Referral Process**

If a child discloses information to you which may be considered abuse or poor practice, remember **you are not responsible for deciding whether or not the abuse has occurred and should not conduct an investigation to establish whether the child is telling the truth.**

Act promptly, following these procedures:

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what is said, you do not require a witness. DO NOT VOICE/VIDEO RECORD THE STATEMENT. You should make written notes.

- Carefully explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others, do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child to continue at his or her own pace and do not interrupt if they are freely recalling events.
- Ask 'open' questions for clarification only.
- Reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing in disclosing to you. Explain what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Consider the safety of the child following their disclosure (for example, if an allegation is made against a parent, try to delay the parent collecting the child from the session until professional advice has been sought from the police or children's services.)

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- Contact the **Safeguarding Officer** at Lions Sports Academy as soon as possible. The **NSPCC** helpline is available for advice 24/7 on **0808 800 5000**
- The contact numbers for **Achieving for Children** can be found on the Governance page on Lions Sports Academy's website.
- Record in writing what was said, including the child's own words. Note the date and time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure you sign and date it. You can use the **Concern Reporting Form** on Lions website to assist.

If you have witnessed or had reported to you an incident or complaint involving the behaviour of a coach/member of Lions staff in relation to a child:

- The member of staff in receipt of the allegation should immediately inform the Lions Safeguarding Officer. (If in doubt, a call can be made to the NSPCC for advice).
- The Safeguarding Officer will inform the local authority to discuss the allegation and determine the appropriate strategy.
- The staff member will be suspended from working with children whilst the investigation is ongoing in line with Lions disciplinary procedures.
- The sport governing body will be informed where a member of staff has been found guilty of committing an offense that:
  - May have harmed /has harmed a child.
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or related to a child.
  - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she would pose a risk or harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

**It is acknowledged that reporting concerns regarding the possibility of abuse can be difficult. Anyone who reports concerns that a child or young person is being, or is at risk of harm, or that a colleague may pose a risk to a child/young person will be provided with support and assistance.**

## Communication between employees, volunteers and children

This guidance is intended to give practical advice to all staff to ensure their conduct and relationships are, and are seen to be, entirely proper and to ensure that employees and volunteers know where further guidance and advice may be obtained.

At all times ensure you:



- Do not give out your personal phone number or address to anyone under the age of 18.
- Do not invite any child or parent to be your 'friend' on Facebook, or on any other social networking site, e.g. MySpace, Bebo, Twitter, Instagram, Windows Live Messenger etc. Do not accept such an invite from a child or parent.
- Fully protect your profile on social media sites such as Facebook.
- Photography, all images must be appropriate and promote the positive activities of the sport and the coaching session. No photographs or videos should be uploaded to social

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media, advertising campaigns or the website without Lions Sports Academy Management and parental/guardian consent.

- Do not transport children by car unless you have gained authority from Lions Sports Academy Management and the parent/guardian. Children under the age of 11 should not travel in the front of the car. No child should be left alone in the car with a driver.
- Check car insurance with your insurance company prior to arranging or agreeing any transportation.
- Do not shower or use the changing facilities at the same time as a child. As per RFU Policy, "adults must only enter the changing rooms when absolutely necessary due to poor behaviour, injury or illness". (For more guidance see RFU Safeguarding Policy).
- Respect the rules of confidentiality – if any child related issue occurs, ensure you follow the correct safeguarding procedures as outlined by Lions Sports Academy and the RFU (see link below)

[http://www.englandrugby.com/mm/Document/Governance/Safeguarding/01/30/34/50/rfuSafeguardingPolicy2014\\_Neutral.pdf](http://www.englandrugby.com/mm/Document/Governance/Safeguarding/01/30/34/50/rfuSafeguardingPolicy2014_Neutral.pdf)

- Do not accept gifts or favours from children or their parents/guardian on a regular basis. Similarly do not give gifts to children as rewards except in the case of competitions or special recognition at Camps as agreed by Lions Sports Academy Management.
- Do not enter in to a sexual relationship with any person under the age of 18. The RFU states, "whilst it may not be a criminal offence, (once the child is over the age of 16) in a rugby union setting it will be treated very seriously and may result in RFU disciplinary action, including suspension from attending rugby clubs).

**If you are in any doubt, contact the Lions Sports Academy Lead Safeguarding Officer** I confirm I

have read and will abide by Lions Sports Academy's Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.

Signature of employee:

Print name of employee:

Date:

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